

SCIENCE

VOL. LXVI OCTOBER 28, 1927 No. 1713

ERWIN F. SMITH

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DR. ERWIN F. SMITH, scientist of the United States Department of Agriculture, whose death occurred on April 6, was one of the chosen few who are given to do great things. The continuous emanation of outstanding contributions to useful knowledge from his laboratories testified, not only to the fruitfulness of his individual efforts, but was significant also of his ability to stimulate and draw out the best talent of the group of unselfish workers with whom he was associated. Considering the modern trend toward individualism in scientific work, this was a mark of high distinction and an outstanding characteristic of the man. One was always impressed by the tone of quiet and unassuming energy and efficiency which prevailed among his devoted coworkers in the laboratory of plant pathology. The guiding hand of real genius was evident in every detail of the multitude of activities carried on there, touching as they did upon all phases of the science which he had advanced more than any other man.

Dr. Smith was almost an ideal representative of that type of inspired scientist who could suppress all desire for worldly advancement in order to devote all of his physical resources and his splendid intellectual equipment to the attainment of scientific truth. His home life as judged by the luxurious standards of modern conduct was almost ascetic in its simplicity, his books, the tools of his trade and the other accessories of scientific research being the only items of considerable expense which he never denied himself. He spared no outlay for these things and surrounded himself with them to have at hand the necessities for uninterrupted study during what would ordinarily be the hours of leisure. An interesting commentary on Dr. Smith's evaluation of the requirements for the type of life he led is found in the fact that his modest home was illuminated in the style of the past generation and that in this day of universal transportation on rubber tires he preferred to walk. Only during the last few weeks of his life, when he must have felt his physical powers waning and undoubtedly had a premonition that conservation of his strength was essential, did he make use of taxicabs to convey him to and from the laboratory.

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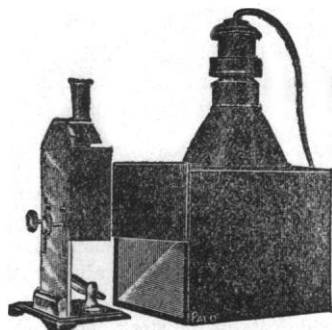
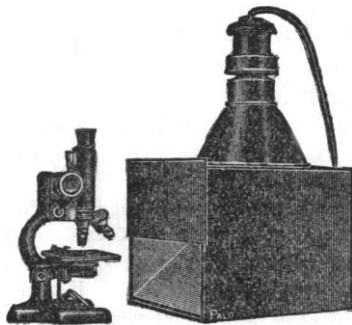


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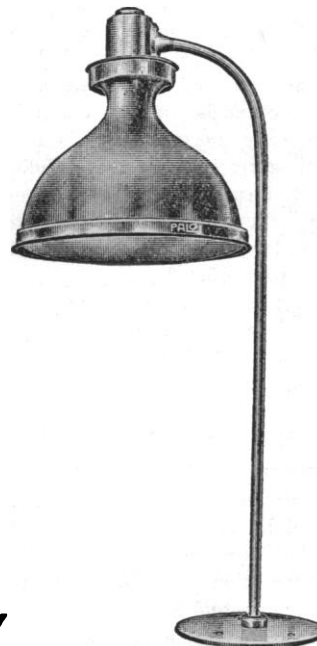
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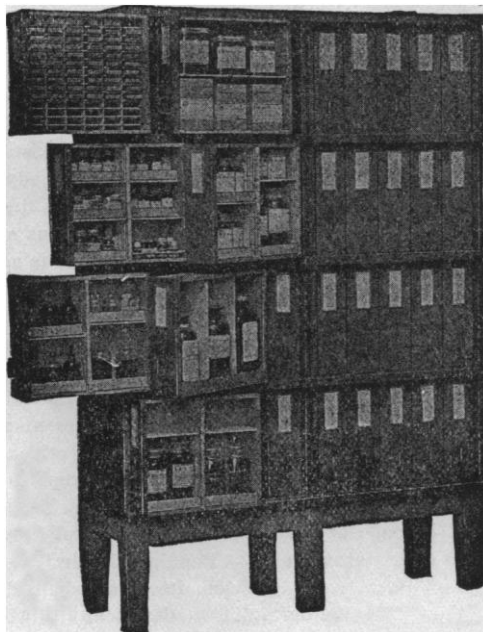
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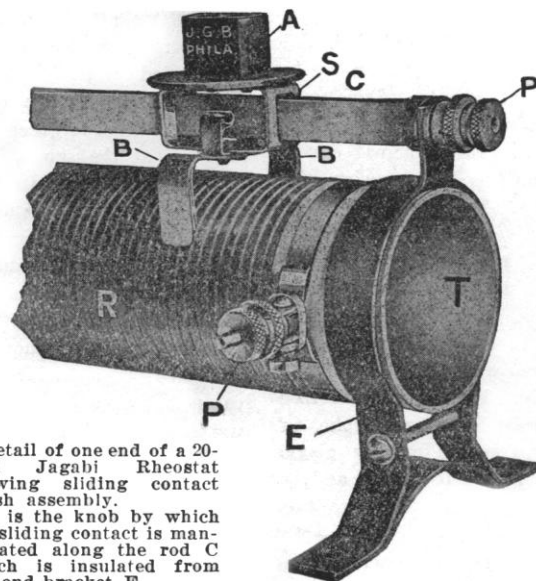
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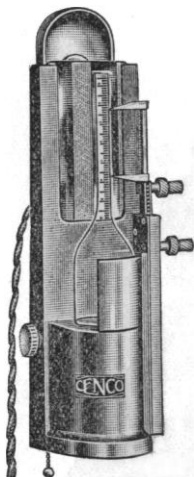
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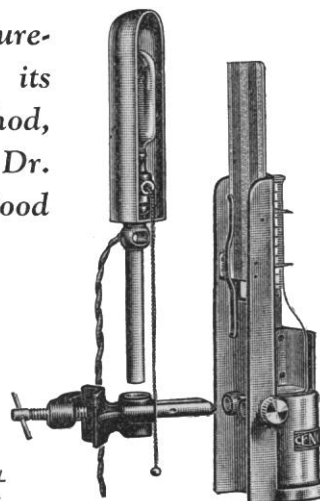
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